

***Remarks***

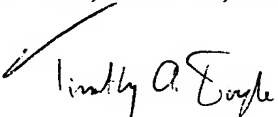
Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 34-41 are pending in the application, with claims 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, and 41 being the independent claims. Claims 1-33 are sought to be canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Claims 34-41 are sought to be amended. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

***Conclusion***

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Preliminary Amendment is respectfully requested. Applicants believe the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.

  
Timothy A. Doyle  
Attorney for Applicants  
Registration No. 51,262

Date: 23 FEB 04

1100 New York Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934  
(202) 371-2600